

1866

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

to be eligible to office imposed therein, will be in every proper case, removed without a determination as to an appeal or party of our fellow citizens on account of their antecedents, and that the State of North Carolina will be forthwith readmitted to the Union, we would respectfully urge upon our whole people to consider and demand that the same be ratified by their representatives in the next General Assembly.

4. That in the present anomalous state of the country, without any provisions contained in our written Constitution, either State or National, or precedents in American history to guide us in the great work of restoring the relations of a State government, ruptured by civil war, in harmony with the National Government, we desire and now stand ready to co-operate, without oblique adherence to any special plan or policy of restoration, in any further action that in the wisdom of Congress and the Executive may be deemed necessary to guarantee to the State of North Carolina a Republican form of government, and restore the Union.

5. That we profoundly regret the detection of Gov. Worth from the Union cause, his proscription for opinion's sake of Union men from office, and the injurious influence which the prominent instigators and actors in the rebellion are exerting over him in his official conduct. We cannot hope that the State will be restored to the Union under his auspices, and as we prefer principles to men, and believe the restoration of the Union to be more important and more vital to the best interests of the State than every thing else, we feel it to be our duty firmly to oppose his re-election.

6. That having full confidence in the patriotism, ability, and sterling Unionism of Gen. ALFRED DOCKERY, of the County of Richmond, we hereby unanimously recommend him to the people of North Carolina as a suitable person to be chosen Governor at the election, to be held on the 15th of October next. Gen. Dockery is well known as a firm and unflinching Union man. He has had no connection with the causes that led to our present unhappy condition, and he has been true to the Union cause. His interests as a farmer are identified with those of the great body of our people. His election in the present crisis would be a fortunate circumstance for the people of the State, and would do much with the loyal people of the North to open the way for our return to the Union.

Letters were read from Lewis Thompson, Esq., Robert P. Dick, Esq., and other distinguished Unionists, approving the object of the meeting and expressing a warm preference for ALFRED DOCKERY for Governor.

On motion of Jas. F. Taylor, Esq., of Wake a committee of three was appointed to act in conjunction with the officers of the meeting in informing Gen. Dockery of his nomination. Whereupon the Chair appointed James E. Taylor, H. J. Menninger, and E. T. Blair.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the Chairman appoint a State Committee of seven, to aid in promoting the Union cause in the State.

Under this resolution the Chair appointed the following gentlemen:

Lewis Thompson of Bertie.	Calvin J. Cowles of Wilkes.
David M. Carter of Beaufort.	Tod R. Caldwell of Burke.
Dr. Eugene Grissom, of Granville.	R. M. Henry of Macon.
C. R. Thomas, of Craven.	A. H. Jones of Henderson.
G. H. Dockery of Richmond.	L. L. Stewart of Rowan.
E. L. Pemberton of Cumberland.	G. W. Logan of Rutherford.
Thomas Settle of Rockingham.	Dr. W. Sloan of Mecklenburg.
Robert P. Dick of Guilford.	

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the Chairman of this meeting be requested to furnish a copy of his address to be published with these proceedings, and that the Raleigh Standard, Newbern Post, Charlotte Observer, People's Press, Henderson Times, and Rutherford Star be respectfully requested to publish the proceedings and address.

On motion it was requested that R. W. Logan, one of the Secretaries of this meeting, proceed to Richmond County to inform Gen. Dockery of his nomination.

On motion the thanks of the meeting were tendered to the Chairman and Secretaries, and then on motion the meeting adjourned.

W. J. DOWNEY, Secretary.
E. W. LOGAN, Secretary.
W. W. HOLDEN, Chairman.

THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN CONSIDERED.

The proposed Constitutional amendment explained, and its adoption urged.

THE UNION THE PARAMOUNT GOOD.

To the People of North Carolina.

FELLOW CITIZENS:

When the conflict of arms had ceased in the Southern States, the President of the United States appointed Provisional Governors, charged with the duty of organizing new governments for the States. This was indispensable as the rebellion in its progress had deprived these States of all civil government. The States remained, but their governments had ceased to exist. These Governors acted under instructions, sometimes given by the President himself, and sometimes by the Secretary of State for him and in his name, but they were also clothed with large discretionary powers. They were authorized to call Conventions of the loyal people, and thus enable them to resume the functions of self-government; and as the great body of the people had, by rebellion, forfeited their political privileges, the President issued a proclamation in which all, with certain exceptions, were offered pardon, provided they would take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereafter, and also former proclamations emancipating the slaves. This offer of pardon appeared to be generally and cheerfully accepted. The great body of the insurgents, including nearly all of those who were but a short time previously in arms against the national authority, were thus generously pardoned, and permitted to the exercise of their full privileges as American citizens save that, as a necessary precaution during the formation of the new governments, martial law was maintained, to preserve the peace and to dispose of such offenses as could not, under the circumstances, be reached by the civil law. After a furious storm there was a great calm. After four years of anarchy, war, and blood, every citizen seemed to submit cheerfully to the new condition of things, and the hope was general that the States would soon be restored to the Union.

In this State, in the space of three months, the Provisional Governor appointed some four thousand officers, the army

oath was administered to not less than sixty thousand citizens; an election was held for delegates to a Convention, which assembled for the purpose of altering and amending the State Constitution, and of presenting "such a republican form of government as would entitle the State to the guarantee of the United States therefor, and her people to protection against invasion, insurrection, and domestic violence." The Convention, after passing such ordinances as were deemed necessary, adjourned. A Governor and a Legislature were then elected. The Provisional Governor was relieved, and the new civil Governor entered on his duties. Senators and representatives to Congress were chosen. The Convention re-assembled pursuant to adjournment, made further alterations and amendments to the Constitution, and then, divesting themselves of their powers, returned to mingle with the great body of their fellow-citizens.

Here, then, was a State, with a government newly made by the voluntary action of its citizens, and prepared, as many thought, to be admitted to the great family of States. The forms were all there, but the proper spirit was wanting. Five years before, the representatives of this State had deliberately, in their own time and way, walked out of the common Congress to engage in rebellion against the national authority; and it was not to be expected that representatives could return from this State to the Congress on their own terms and in their own way. The President had instructed the Governor, and had told the people of the State, that a spirit of sincere loyalty was the chief requisite in the work of organization. He warned them that those who had been conspicuous as rebels—who had deliberately involved the people in war, or who, being in, had persistently closed their ears to all overtures of peace—should not be prominent in the work of restoration, but must "take back seats" until the work was accomplished. He told them that their members elect to Congress ought to be "persons who could comply with any existing constitutional or legal test." He told them that the work performed by the Provisional Governor, in accordance with his instructions, that in all appointments to office "those persons who had never faltered in their allegiance to the government" should be preferred, had his unqualified approval; that treason must be made odious, and loyalty must be encouraged and rewarded; that the State could not expect to be restored to the Union until her people had "washed their hands of every thing that partook in the slightest degree of the rebellion;"—and that any material variation from these views and these instructions would most probably prove "fatal" to the admission of the State.

I undertake to say, and will prove, that the public men of

North Carolina, who now control her affairs, acting for and in the name of her people, have not even carried out the plan of President Johnson, mild and generous as it is.

The Provisional Governor left some four thousand loyal persons in office. These persons were appointed under the direction of the President, and the appointments were approved by him. With few exceptions, all of them that could be reached by the Governor and the Legislature have been ejected from office, and persons less loyal have been appointed in their place. It is not pretended that the public service has been benefitted by the change. Those ejected are in no respect inferior in ability or fitness to those who have succeeded them. We are obliged to conclude, therefore, that these removals were made to reward secession partizans, who are less loyal to the government than the former incumbents. I know they were made in opposition to the President's wishes, if not in contempt of his authority. These appointments constituted a very important part of the work of restoration. It was the wish of the President that this work should be maintained intact until the State was restored. Indeed, it was indispensable, in his judgment, to the restoration of the State, for he has repeatedly declared that the most loyal of our people should alone take part in this work, and that "every opportunity should be made available to encourage and strengthen to the fullest extent those who have never faltered in their allegiance to the government." In the recent appointments in the place of loyal men thus summarily ejected without good cause, a directly opposite rule seems to have been adopted. No opportunity has been lost by the present State Executive to encourage and strengthen those who have not only faltered in their allegiance to the government, but special care has been taken to fill the offices with persons, and among them unpardoned persons, who were conspicuous in the rebellion, who have thus far given no substantial evidence that they have repented of their treason, and who, so far as the country is informed, are not disposed to cherish or inculcate national sentiments. It seems to me, that an Executive who was really devoted to the President's plan, and anxious for its success, would have cherished it with care, would have preserved it in all its material and vital parts, and would have touched it only with a view to improve it in accordance with the well-known and oft-repeated views of its author. I can account for the course of our present State Executive in this respect only on two grounds. Either he is opposed to the President's plan, and does not wish it success; or, if he is for it, his disposition to reward his partizans who are clamoring for place, is stronger than those convictions of duty which incline him to carry it out.

In addition to this, it was considered indispensable that the members elected to Congress should be persons of undoubted loyalty. The President and his Cabinet, and the great body of the Northern people had taken it for granted that such persons would be chosen. Every step that had been taken in the work of restoration was with reference to representation in Congress. If the work should fail at this point it would fail entirely. Congress had provided, in 1862, an oath to be taken by all its members. There were worthy and respectable persons in every Congressional District in the State who could have taken this oath, and could have thus claimed their seats. This was well known. But, what was done? In the first district, a person who could have taken the oath was defeated. In the second district, a person who could have taken the oath was defeated. In the third district, a person who could have taken the oath was defeated. In the fourth district, a person who was only technically prevented from taking the oath, and who had already received an important appointment at the hands of the President, was defeated, not by a man equally loyal, but by an "unpardoned rebel" then, as now. In the fifth district, one of the oldest, ablest, and most consistent Unionists of the State, and a particular friend of the President, was defeated by a person who had just apostatized from Unionism, and allied himself with the secession party. In the sixth district, a candidate who could have taken the oath was defeated, by a gentleman who had made himself popular outside his County only by the services he had performed as an officer in the Confederate army. But one district, the seventh, elected a representative who could take the oath, and he has since been an object, on that account, of abuse and ridicule by the secession press. It is true, one of the Senators elected by the Legislature is a loyal man, and is debarred from subscribing the oath only by a technicality; but it is well known that his election was conceded by the majority simply as a matter of policy, and that his colleague, who received nearly all the votes that were cast, had been a conspicuous advocate of the rebellion, and was then, as he is still, an "unpardoned rebel." Thus was the most vital requisite in the President's policy deliberately disregarded. The President had said that those only should be appointed or elected to office who had never faltered in their allegiance to the government; but the secession leaders said nay,—"we will elect whom we please, for we hold that fidelity to the Confederacy is the best evidence of sound Unionism. The President had pointed to the test oath, and had declared that members elected to Congress should be persons who "could comply with any existing constitutional or legal test." But these leaders said, not so—"we hold that this oath is unconstitutional and tyrannical, and we will not degrade ourselves by complying with it. The President had declared that treason must be rendered odious, and that loyalty to the Union and love for the flag should be cherished and honored; but these leaders replied that they had not committed treason, and that supreme loyalty and devotion to the Union constituted no claim either on their votes or on their respect and confidence. The President was thus assaulted and wounded in the house of his own professed friends. Slavery had been formally abolished, for the leaders knew that they had themselves put it to hazard when they involved the States in rebellion; and that, as the result of the war, there was no hope for its perpetuation. It cost nothing, therefore, to proclaim a great fact which the whole world could see. The act of secession was declared null and void. This was equally easy. They hesitated only in relation to the rebel debt, but a sharp rebuke from the President caused them reluctantly to repudiate that. They did what they were told to do on great questions of policy—they conformed, whether reluctantly or cheerfully, to the wishes of the President in relation to measures of the most vital importance, but when

the offices were to be filled when the State was to be clothed in the "wedding garment" to be presented at Washington, they could no longer restrain themselves. They did appetite for office which had led them to involve the country in war, revived the President's plan was forgotten, except in so far as they could enjoy office and honors under it, and for the ignoble party triumph of the hour they discarded that plan, and destroyed all hope that the States could be restored to the Union in accordance with its provisions.

These secession parties are Johnson men only so long as they can enjoy power under his plan of restoration. He may himself be as loyal as he pleases, and may call them rebels and traitors, as he does, and highly denounce secession as a crime, if he will only permit them to hold the offices, and to tyrannize over Union men. It is not that they like him, but they love power, and they hate the radicals, so called, whom he denounces. They will be very good Johnson men as long as he pursues this course; but if he should turn in this direction, and begin to "fight it out again on this line," he will find so much to reprove and condemn—so many wrongs to right, and so much treason to rebuke and suppress, that praises will be turned into "curses not loud, but deep," and it will be at once proclaimed that President Johnson has proved faithless to his pledges. I tell the President that his plan has been marred and destroyed by malcontents and traitors at this end of the line. I tell him that he has confided where confidence is not deserved, and that, by his elementary springing from good motives, he has nourished a brood of vipers that will sting liberty, and will sting him, if he should get in their way. I tell him that his line at this end is disorganized. The "captains of armies and hundreds" whom he appointed, have been cashiered and banished from service, and his enemies, and the enemies of loyal majorities in the United States and of the Union, have assumed and are now exercising supreme control. Devotion to the Union is no longer the passport to office or even to the respect of those who control our affairs. Regard for the flag, unless it is displayed in such places and in such a way as to suit the fastidious taste of traitors, is no longer commended. Instead of a prompt and cheerful submission to the results of the war and to the legally expressed will of the majority, we hear words of defiance, and ropes expressed that shamefully may intervene, as the result of some vaguely looked for commission at Washington and in the Northern States. Seats are demanded in Congress as a right, even for "unpardoned rebels." Those who can take the test oath, instead of being honored for their loyalty, are ridiculed and despised; and such of our people as are most devoted to the Union, and most anxious for its restoration on terms to be prescribed by the majority, are characterized as "mean whites," and hold us as odious and infamous. Faithful and capable officers are elected for no other reason than that they are Unionists, and persons are appointed in their places who sympathize more with the dead Confederacy than with the living Union. In a word, treason has been made respectable, and loyalty odious. This is not the fault of the President's plan. The honor and durability of the edifice must depend on the quality of the material used in its construction. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. The President has been deceived. If he had dealt sternly with traitors, and if he had seen to it by special instructions and orders, that the loyal only should conduct the work of restoration, his plan, in my judgment, would have succeeded. We know that in this State there was an abundance of good material for the work of restoration. It was used for a time, and then cast aside. Those politicians who cast this material aside are enemies to the President, and enemies to the Union; and the longer their conduct in this respect is allowed to

no unrebuked by him, the more dialoyal and defiant these politicians will become.

The Union of the States must be restored at all hazards and on the best terms that can be obtained, and the plan of the President having failed through the treachery and selfishness of politicians, what now remains to be done?

There are but two plans before the country—the Executive plan, and that of the Congress or law-making power. The President's plan provides, first, that the States exist as States, though by rebellion they had lost their governments; secondly, that slavery must be formally abolished by an amendment to the federal Constitution; thirdly, that the right of secession must be abandoned; fourthly, that the rebel debt must be repudiated, and, as a matter of course, the national debt must be paid; fifthly, that loyal persons only should reorganize governments for the States, and that no members elect to Congress from the Southern States should be presented for admission, who cannot take the test-oath.

This is the President's plan. What is the Congressional plan? It is as follows, in the shape of a joint resolution, proposing amendments to the federal Constitution:

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SEC. 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SEC. 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

SEC. 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SEC. 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

This plan, after recognizing, as the President's plan does, the existence of the States as States, proposes first, that a colored man from Massachusetts shall have the same liberty in North Carolina that he possesses in his own State, and that a colored man from North Carolina shall have the same liberty in Massachusetts which he possesses at home. It provides that no State shall abridge the privileges or immunities of a citizen of the United States, or deny to any person life, liberty, or property or the equal protection of the law. Who objects to that? I am sure President Johnson does not; for the civil rights bill, now in existence as a law, and which will in no event be repealed, makes the same provision for the col-

ored race, and the objection of the President was not to this feature of that law, but to that part of it which, as he thought, improperly subordinated the State Courts to the Courts of the United States. It may be said that there is some concealed purpose in this provision hereafter to force negro suffrage on the States as the only means of securing to colored people the "privileges or immunities" referred to. This answer is that this cannot be so, for the reason that a subsequent section in the amendment leaves the question of suffrage wholly and solely with the States.

The Congressional plan also proposes that representatives in Congress shall be apportioned among the States in proportion to qualified voters. Who can justly object to that? Under the Constitution while slavery existed, not only were the white inhabitants counted in apportioning representatives, but three-fifths of the slaves were added to the whites. This rule has ceased with the extinction of slavery. There are now no such "persons" as those referred to in the Constitution, of whom three-fifths must be counted, but the whole population of both whites and blacks must be counted in apportioning representatives. Under this new rule it has been estimated that the Southern States would gain eight members of Congress. Is it to be expected that the free white population of the North will agree to this? As it is, and as it has been from the beginning of the government, five negroes have had as much weight in the Congress of the United States as three white men, for for every three white men five negroes have been counted in apportioning representatives. The proposed amendment provides that the Southern States shall be entitled to their present number of members until the period of the next apportionment, in 1872; but after that time representatives must be apportioned according to voters, and not, as now, according to the whole population. Up to 1872 this State will be entitled to seven members, the present number; after that time, she will be entitled for the next ten years to eight members, provided the colored people are allowed to vote, and if they are not allowed to vote, she will be entitled to five members. The same rule will apply to all the States. If it is said that this rule is unjust, and that the whole population should be counted, I answer that representation and taxation should go together, and that it is not just to claim representatives on a certain class of population, and then deny to that population the privilege of voting for those representatives. If I am told that the whole population ought to be counted, though one class of it only should be allowed to vote, I answer that the free white men of the North will never consent that the Southern States shall add by the results of their rebellion to their power in the House of Representatives by counting the non-voting negro population; and that as a citizen of North Carolina, I am unwilling that the Eastern part of the State shall count their manumitted slaves against the free white loyal men of the West. It will be for the people of the State to decide in 1872, whether they will have eight members of Congress with negro suffrage, or five members without negro suffrage. I have the fullest confidence in the people of the State. I feel sure that their decision on this subject will be a wise one, and for one I expect to go with them and submit cheerfully to the will of the majority.

But we are not without light on this subject from President Johnson himself. In his interview with Mr. Stearns of Boston, in October last, he said:

"Many years ago I moved in the Legislature of Tennessee that the apportionment of representatives to Congress from that State should be by qualified voters. The apportionment is now fixed until 1872; before that time we might change the basis of representation from population to qualified voters, as well as South, and in the course of time the States, without regard to color, might extend the elective franchise to all who possessed certain mental, moral, or such other qualifications as might be determined by an enlightened public judgment."

Mr. Johnson is, therefore, not only in favor of this provision of the amendment basing members of Congress on qualified voters, but he looks forward to the period when the States will establish what is called impartial suffrage.

The proposed amendment also provides that certain persons who had taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and afterwards engaged in the rebellion, shall not hold any office, civil or military, under the United States or under any State, unless the Congress by a vote of two-thirds shall remove such a disability.

What sound objection can there be to this? If it be said that it is harsh and degrading in its nature, I reply that President Johnson has already gone much further in making treason odious than this provision goes. He excluded from his amnesty proclamation not less than twenty-five thousand persons. He not only deprived them, at his mere will and pleasure, of the right to hold office, but of the right to vote; and he held them, as he holds some of them to-day, not only as non-voters, but liable at any moment to the pains and penalties of treason. This proposed amendment deprives no man of his right of suffrage. It simply says to the fomenters and leaders of the rebellion—Your lives and property are spared; you are permitted to vote, as heretofore; you will not be molested in your ordinary rights as citizens; but you will not be permitted just now to occupy the chief places over the heads of those whom your conduct has ruined. You may come into the congregation, and receive the benefit of the exercises, but you can not be priests or elders at this time. Your hands are still red with the blood of your brethren, whom ye slew while they were struggling to save the Ark of the Covenant, and the fires of resentment and pride are still smouldering in your hearts. But even were this not so, it is not reasonable or seemly that the destroyers of the peace and happiness of the country should at once become the conservators of that peace and the promoters of that happiness. Stand aside for the present. As you have lost position by your bad conduct, so you shall regain it only by your good conduct. We will not judge you harshly, but tenderly and kindly as brethren. We do not punish you. We simply put you on your good behavior for the future; and if you repent and do well, and manifest a sincere purpose to become loyal, Union-loving citizens, it will afford us much pleasure to remove the disability, and allow you to hold office. What could be more reasonable or generous? But we are told by those who are thus excluded that the object is to punish and degrade them. If this be true, it punishes and degrades Union men also. It puts under ban nearly all the leading Union men of the State. Our opponents are candid for once. They admit that it is a punishment to be excluded from office, and they have been so long in office that they feel "degraded" when they are cast out. These very leaders punished our people for four long years. They tithed them, they impressed them, they conscribed them, forcing even the yearling boys from their weeping mothers into camp, and into the fire of battle, before their bones had hardened,—they hounded down our best citizens as traitors, and shot and hanged them, because they loved the Union and the flag,—they plundered, exhausted, impoverished, and ruined this people,—and yet now complain, after having inflicted all these wrongs on their country, that they are about to be punished, because they are not to be allowed to monopolize for all time all the offices and honors!

I regard this provision as generous and merciful in its character. It seems to me if these politicians thus excluded really loved their country, they would sacrifice themselves temporarily for the good of their country. If they really desired the restoration of the Union, or if they only had becoming modesty and self-respect, they would not stand in the way, but

would come forward like patriots and men and not to be overlooked or forgotten until the great work was accomplished. They would say, our country first, our country first, our country all the time. The issue is the Union of the States with these persons temporarily put of office, or continued disunion, discontent and probable civil war with these persons in office. That man is no patriot but is supremely selfish who would retain his hold on office, when he knows he is doing so at the expense of the unity, harmony and prosperity of his country.

The remaining section of the proposed amendment provides that the national debt shall never be questioned, and that the rebel debt shall be held illegal and void. Here, also, we have the concurrence and endorsement of the President, repeatedly made known in the most emphatic manner.

The President simply enabled the people of the rebellious States to organize new governments. It was his wish that these governments should be, in all respects, unmistakably loyal—that they should have no sectionalism or secessionism about them, but should be living sources of national principles and sentiments. It was his desire, also, as conclusive and crowning evidence of such loyalty and such nationality of sentiment, that the members chosen to Congress should be persons who could take the test oath. I am satisfied that if these States had done what was required of them with alacrity and cheerfulness, and had sent Senators and Representatives who, to a man, could have taken this oath, their claim to be admitted to their seats would have been irresistible. The Union would have been restored last December. We should have had peace and harmony to-day, and reviving and increasing prosperity, instead of bickerings, and discord, and sectional hate, and threats of revolution, and the locking up, as the result of these things, of all those resources which stimulate and reward enterprise and industry. But such was the destructive and paralyzing influence of the spirit of secession among our people and in our public councils, that the Congress, which is a constitutional co-worker with the President in these things, began to doubt the fitness of the States for admission. That body, without undoing what the President had done, at length required that what the States had agreed to do in their amended Constitutions, or by ordinances of Conventions, or by legislative enactment, should be engrafted in the fundamental law of the nation. That is all. The proposed amendment in relation to representation in Congress, is the legitimate result, as I have already shown, of the extinction of slavery. There is not a principle in any section of the proposed amendment which has not received in some form or other the approval of the President. If, therefore, our people agree with the President, and if they are disposed to carry out in good faith what they have already conceded, to say nothing of the respect which they owe to the law-making department of the government, I can see no good reason why they should not settle this business finally and forever by placing these guarantees in the national fundamental law. There was no time within sixty days after the surrender of Lee's forces, when they would not have accepted such terms gladly. I state the fact that it was distinctly understood that the whole work of restoration would be subject to the revision, and consequently, to acceptance or rejection by the Congress. The official record shows that Secretary Seward informed Gov. Slicker in July, 1865, that the government of Mississippi would be "provisional only until the civil authorities shall be restored, with the approval of Congress." And in September, 1865, he also informed Gov. Marvin of Florida that "it must be distinctly understood that the restoration to which your proclamation refers, will be subject to the decision of Congress." I repeat, the Congress has expressly and

intentionally remitted to undo the work of the President. The very able, enlightened, and patriotic committee of that body, after the fullest and most anxious deliberation, determined that the present State governments, organized by the President, should stand; but they recommended, as necessary to complete the work of restoration, that the amendments to the Constitution to which I have referred, should be adopted—not, as we have been told, by three-fourths only of such States as are represented in Congress, but by three-fourths of all the States. If it be said that the Southern States, though allowed to vote on these amendments, were excluded from the Congress by which they were proposed, the answer is, they had no voice in proposing the most vital of all the amendments, the one which abolished slavery. If it be necessary further to amend the Constitution, as two-thirds of the American people represented in Congress think it is, before the Union can be re-established on a just, solid, and enduring basis, such amendments must be proposed by Congress, for the President has no such power under our form of government.

There is, then, no material difference between the President's plan and that of Congress. They are similar in principle, and nearly the same in detail. If there be humiliation and degradation for the South in the Congressional plan, there is humiliation and degradation for the South in the President's plan. Even the President's plan can not be carried into effect without the consent of Congress; and if one man can require so much of the States lately in rebellion, can not the Congress, representing so many millions of loyal people, require a little more? We have passed through the wilderness. We have left behind us the horrors which encompassed us, and sat heavy on our hearts, when we wandered in the forbidden fields of rebellion and war. We have at length reached Jordan. The promised land is right before us. Shall we linger and perish on the banks?—or shall we "go up to possess the land?" If a Moses be necessary to divide the waters, Aaron and his sons can alone bear the Ark. The President is a power in this country, but Congress is greater than he. It ought to be, because it is the sole law-making power. The States went out without law; they must go back under the law. The President alone cannot restore to them their forfeited privileges. This must be done, and can only be done by the co-ordinate, co-equal departments of that great and beneficent government against which they revolted, and made war. It is idle to despise or reject the authority of the Congress, and then hope that by any means the States can be restored.

But it is asserted that the President will, in the last resort, summon and recognize a Congress of his own, including the members from the Southern States. I do not believe the President designs, in any event, or for any cause, to plunge the country into civil war. But if such a thing be probable, and the war should be renewed, the end would be the total destruction of government, society, and property in these Southern States. The weaker section would drain the cup of anguish to the very dregs. Those who originate such reports and make such calculations, are slanderers of the President. They are neither friends to him nor friends to the country. They are reckless agitators, who would stand off from the battles which their wicked passions would cause, to plunder the helpless and the dead, or to sate their vengeance by the spectacle of brothers again plunging their bayonets into brothers' bosoms. There is no Congress but the Congress recently in session at Washington, which will meet again in December. This Congress will increase in numbers as Southern members are admitted to it, but it will not be diminished.

It is also asserted that the Southern States will vote for President and Vice-President in 1868, though they may not be represented in Congress. It is not to be expected that the majority will permit this. The seceded States were not allowed to vote in 1864, and we may be sure a similar law will be passed for 1868. President Johnson will enforce the law. It is his peculiar boast that he is a man of the people, and that he has confidence in the people. He is too sound a republican to oppose his will, in the last resort, to the will of the majority.

There is no hope, therefore, fellow citizens, but in the prompt restoration of the Union, and this can be effected in no other way, in my judgment, than by accepting the proposed Constitutional amendment. We are admonished by the recent elections that the North will be satisfied with nothing less. It may require more, and I have no doubt it will, if we reject this amendment. During the rebellion, I was for the shortest road to peace. I am now for the shortest and straightest road right back to the Union. I love my State, and I want the best terms I can get for her. So strong is this love, and so ardent is my attachment to the Union, that I would be willing to put myself under ban for the remainder of my life to see the State restored. But because I have told the people the truth, will they censure me? I cannot believe they will. I have been frank with them, it may be to my own injury. I cannot help it, for if I serve them at all I must do so with candor and honesty. My interests, my sympathies, my hopes are all identified with theirs. Passion and prejudice may rule the hour, but a day of reason and reflection will come, and then justice will be done to all. It would have been easy for me to have gone with the current. Like others I might have made terms with my opponents. I held a position which would have enabled me to do this with some success. I might have grasped honors, and put money in my purse. I could have gone to a party with which I once acted, many of whose members, from former associations, still have my regard and sympathy. But, I could not do it. I could not abandon the cause of the Union. The path of duty was rugged and thorny, but I continued to walk in it. I am in it still. I will never leave it. I do not bear censure, but I fear to do wrong. Nor am I slow to party. In 1848 I opposed my party on internal improvements, and I have the gratification to believe that my course then ensured the appropriation for the Central Railroad, which was the great pioneer work of the kind in our State. In 1860 I refused to go with my party in opposing the principle of *ad valorem*. In 1860 I refused to go with the great mass of my party for disunion. I stand now where I stood then. I am the same loyal man I was when the President appointed me Provisional Governor in May, 1865. I have not changed. I do not intend to change. I know this is a dark day for Union men in the South, but I intend to stand by the Union, in the darkness as in the light, so long as its flag floats or a star glitters in its folds. There is no hope for this people but in the Union. Throughout its whole existence it has been beneficent in its character and operations. It has borne heavily on no State—it has deprived no man of his liberty, except from the stern necessity of war—it has held the hand of correction on its rebellious children more in sorrow than in anger. We attempted recently to "calculate its value" at a time when its flag waved only for our protection, and when its horn of plenty was pouring down every good thing into our midst, and behold how suddenly destruction rushed in upon us like a flood! We then humbled ourselves before God, and promised to submit to lawful authority. Have we not forgotten this promise? We have been engaged in battle, because God willed it; let us now show what a great thing it is to conquer ourselves. Let us "rule our temper." Let us conquer and subdue our passions and prejudices. The great body of the people of the North are our

friends. They wish us well. They do not desire to humble or degrade us. They do not want our lands or our houses. They are not seeking our blood. They are tired of war. They regard us as an elder towards his younger brother, who has been sorely chastised for his first offence. They desire our prosperity, because it is inseparably connected with their own. They do not want to hold us as subject provinces, but they wish to live with us as equals in the Union. That Union stretches out its mighty arms to embrace us. For me, I am anxious to return to it. I regard it, in the language of Washington as "the primary object of patriotic desire." In it, I know we shall be safe. It will be to us all, as in the past, a copious fountain of innumerable blessings. Out of it, I can see nothing in the future but discord, anarchy, military rule, poverty, ignorance, and wretchedness. I am, therefore, in the fullest and strongest sense, a Union man. Discarding all other platforms, I stand on the platform of Washington. I know we can not err as long as we follow his precepts, and look to his illustrious example for light to guide our footsteps. What would he say, if appreciating the passions which divide us, he could look down upon us from his blest abode? He would say to the North, "give," and to the South "hold not back." He would tell us that what the sword had settled should be confirmed by the tongue and the pen. He would tell us that the Union, which he toiled and suffered to establish, was the paramount good; that every thing else should be sacrificed, if necessary, to its restoration and preservation; that the passions and resentments engendered by the war should perish with the war; and that nothing should prevent the immediate restoration of the Union and the harmony of its various parts.

Fellow-citizens, there are certain State issues, just now engaging the attention of the people, in relation to which I will submit a few observations.

I regret, on several accounts, the rejection of the new State Constitution. It was not all that I desired, but it was in many respects an excellent Constitution, and a decided improvement upon the old one.— One of the ablest and most loyal bodies that ever assembled in the State, gave to this instrument the most patient consideration. Among other things, it struck the last letter from the human conscience, by granting to our Jewish fellow-citizens the right to hold office; it provided for expediting justice, thus maintaining the peace of society; it dealt a deserved blow at the right of secession, by substituting an oath to support the Constitution of the State not incompatible with the national Constitution, for the oath of primary allegiance to the State in the old Constitution; it provided for a Lieutenant-Governor by the people, to take the place of the Governor in the event of his death or disability; it abolished, or greatly modified the objectionable landed qualification for members of the Senate and House of Commons; and it established the white basis for the House of Commons. If this Constitution was rejected upon the ground that it was too liberal or too radical, I take it for granted, from some knowledge of our people, that the next Constitution will be still more liberal and radical. Our people will not be satisfied until the white basis is established for both branches of the Legislature; and it may be that they will require the entire abolition of the property qualification, and the election of many officers by the people now chosen by the Legislature.

The Convention exhibited wise forethought in embodying, in separate ordinances its repudiation of secession and the rebel debt, the abolition of slavery, and the provision allowing colored persons to be heard in our Courts as witnesses; for, from the spirit manifested at the late voting for and against the Constitution, it is more than probable that these ordinances, if they had been incorporated in the Constitution,

would have rendered it much more objectionable than it was to those who voted against it. It is the only ordinance that has been rejected. They may be surprised to know that the only ordinance that has been called.

Our people are impoverished and deeply in debt. Previous to the rebellion the estimated value of the property of the State was not less than four hundred millions of dollars. It is more than probable that the estimated value of property now does not reach one hundred millions. The State debt, with the interest recently added to it, cannot be much less than eighteen millions. It is impracticable at present to redeem the principal of this debt. It is impracticable at present to discharge our individual debts. The State is not, in any sense, in the present condition of things. We shall have no capital from a distance, no emigration, no payment of claims held by our people against the Federal Government for property taken or destroyed during the war—no adequate or reliable means to stimulate enterprise and industry, and no solid foundation for business of any kind, until the State is restored to the Union. I know it is said the abolition of slavery was a providential act; or, if not, that our slaves were forcibly taken from us, and that under either view, we have been released from our obligation to pay our debts. I do not concur in this view. Slavery was abolished by the unwise action of the Southern States. That first gun at Fort Sumter, fired by Southern men, who had previously fired the Southern heart for rebellion, was the death-knell of slavery. It was our own act, and we can not take advantage of our own wrong. We should bear in mind, in considering this subject, that if either party is to blame it is not the creditor, but the debtor. The debtor has had, or may now have the benefit of what he owes to another. The events through which we have passed have convulsed and to a great extent have changed society. They have impoverished our people. But they have not, therefore, released us from our lawful obligations. These events constitute good reason for indulgence and forbearance in the collection of debts, but the debts remain, and must be paid. I plead only for indulgence and forbearance. We may honestly say we can not, but we cannot honestly say we will not pay our debts. An honest bankrupt never loses the respect or the confidence of the wise and good; but an individual or a State that says "it is my hand and seal, but I will not pay," proclaims for himself and his State that there is no virtue in moral obligation. North Carolina will always. Centuries hence her name, and I trust, her fame will be known among the nations. States prosper and flourish and are respected in proportion as they adhere to the eternal principles of justice. Whatever we may do now, in this respect, will be known and scrutinized by those who are to come after us, and if our descendants shall be of the noble name of our Gaster and Mason, they will blush for their ancestors if they deliberately repudiate their just obligations. But we are losing golden moments. Interest is being added to principal, thus augmenting our own burdens and the burden of society. Our capacity to discharge our obligations, whether public or private, is greatly diminished by our exclusion from the Union. If we are to have any energy, therefore, should be exerted to get back to the Union. If we remain out of it, the poorer we shall become, and the more will be our burdens as a State and as individuals. While every man should hearance should be shown towards tax-payers and debtors, at the same time guard the honor of the State and our credit as well as our own. If we are to be of more value to the world than we are now, we must rise and shine among the wealthiest and proudest of the world.

